2000 BC College & Institute Student Outcomes

The Highlights

Each year, thousands of students complete their educational programs at British Columbia's public colleges, university colleges, and institutes. These institutions recognize that student feedback is important to maintaining a high-quality, relevant post-secondary education system, and in co-operation with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, they collect information through a yearly province-wide survey.

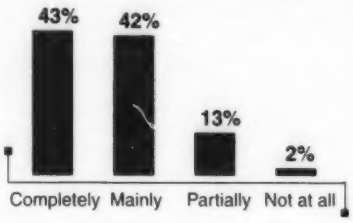
The BC College and Institute Student Outcomes Survey contacts former students by telephone 9–20 months after they have completed all, or a significant portion, of their program. The survey asks former students what they have done since leaving and if they are satisfied with various aspects of the education they received and their experiences at the institution.

This report highlights the findings from the Student Outcomes Survey conducted in the spring of 2000. The results are based on input from 20,468 of 34,934 eligible former students from 21 of BC's public colleges, university colleges, and institutes. To view the Highlights and other Student Outcomes reports on the web, please see http://outcomes.ceiss.org/.

Are former students satisfied with their studies?

Most former students (85 percent), whether from Applied programs, Arts and Sciences, or Adult Basic Education (ABE), were either completely or mainly satisfied with their studies. High levels of satisfaction have been consistently reported by respondents to the Student Outcomes Survey, since its inception in 1988.

Former students were satisfied with their studies

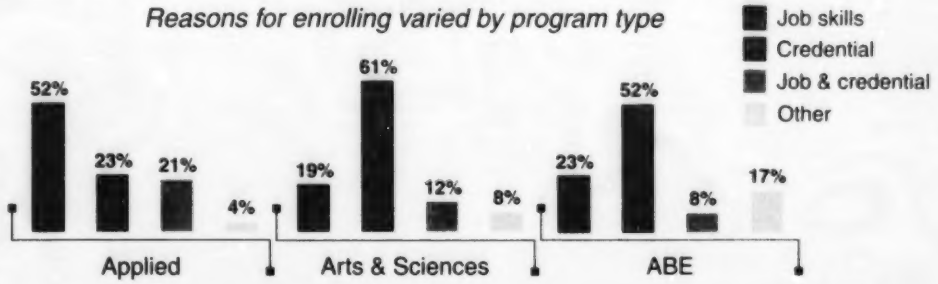


Most former students meet their main objective for enrolling.

Furthermore, 83 percent of respondents to the 2000 survey said they completely or mostly met their primary objective for enrolling in their program.

Students enter the post-secondary education system for a variety of reasons. Most reasons given by survey respondents were either job- or credential-related. Only 7 percent of respondents enrolled for other reasons, such as personal interest or to improve basic skills.

Reasons for enrolling varied by program type



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The majority of former students (62 percent) were from Applied programs, which are usually intended to lead to employment in specific areas. Fifty-two percent of Applied respondents reported that they enrolled at their college, university college, or institute to obtain job skills. In contrast, former Arts and Sciences students, who comprised 27 percent of respondents, were more likely to enrol for credential-related reasons (60 percent).

Over half of Adult Basic Education (ABE) respondents, who made up 11 percent of those surveyed, enrolled to get a credential. Almost a third said they enrolled to obtain or improve job skills.

What are former students doing now?

Seventy-three percent of former students were working at the time of the survey, whether they continued studying or not. Most former Applied students were working, while former Arts and Sciences students were just as likely to be studying as working.

The majority of former students were employed, whether they continued studying or not.

Of the Arts and Sciences respondents who were both working and studying, 39 percent were working full-time. Although Applied students were less likely to combine work with study, 64 percent of those who did were working full-time.

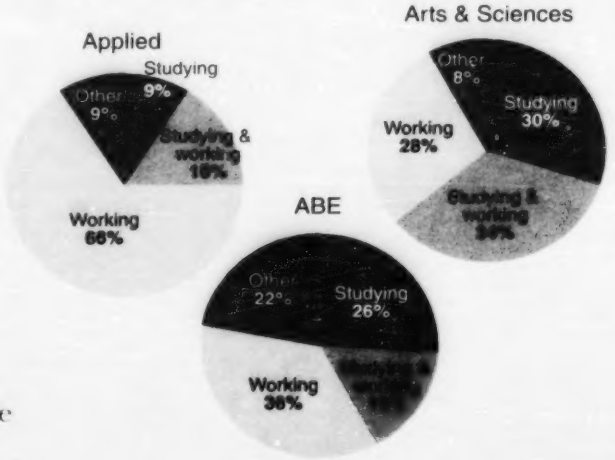
Over the last five years, the percentages of respondents who were working, studying, or working and studying have changed little.

When surveyed in 2000, 85 percent of former students reported they were in the labour force. Of those respondents in the labour force, 86 percent were employed, and of those employed, 75 percent were employed full-time.

Many employed former students reported that their job was related to their training. This is particularly true of former Applied students who were more than twice as likely as other former students to report their job was training-related (76 percent, compared to less than a third of former Arts and Sciences and ABE students).

Seventy-five percent of former students who were working in 2000 said their education was very or somewhat useful in *getting* their main job, and 71 percent reported that it was very or somewhat useful in *performing* their job. Former students in Applied programs were most likely to report that their education was useful in getting and performing their job.

Many former students were working and studying at the time of the survey

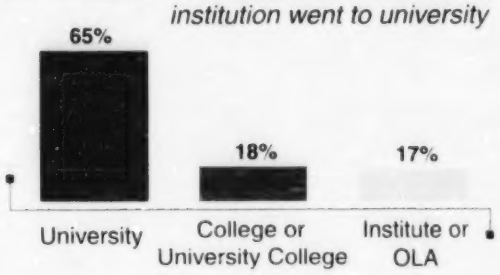


Where do former students continue their education?

Former students from Arts and Sciences programs were more likely than those from Applied programs (72 percent compared to 31) to continue their education after leaving their original program. Eighty-seven percent of respondents (excluding ABE) who went on to further education continued their studies in BC's public post-secondary system. Approximately 80 percent from Applied and Arts and Sciences programs who continued their education took courses related to their original program.

Nearly all former students who continued studying were accepted into the program they wanted.

Most students who transferred to a different institution went to university



Most Applied and Arts and Sciences respondents (71 percent) who stayed in BC's public post-secondary system transferred to a different institution for further studies.

Ninety-one percent of students who transferred reported they successfully enrolled in the institution of their choice, in their preferred program (95 percent), and in all of the courses they wanted (86 percent). Of those students who expected to transfer credits to their new institution, 86 percent reported they were either very satisfied or satisfied with their overall transfer experience.

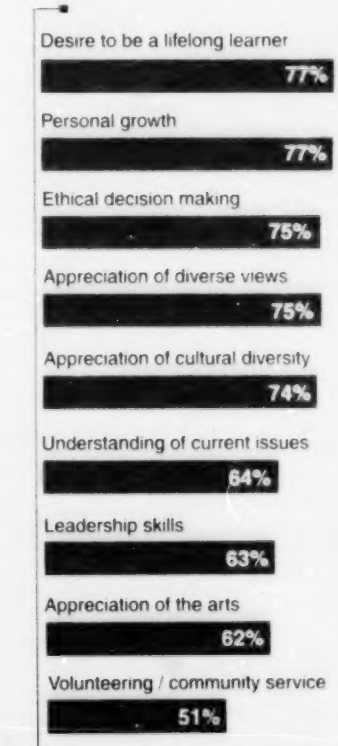
More detailed information on admissions and transfer issues in the BC post-secondary system can be found in the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer 2001 report: *Admissions and Transfer Experiences of Students Continuing their Studies in British Columbia.*

Does the college experience foster personal development?

In the 2000 survey, one-half of former students were asked to rate how well their program and their broader educational experience helped them to develop in certain personal and social areas. The majority of respondents gave very good or good ratings to most of these items. In particular, they felt that their program encouraged them to be lifelong learners. They also reported it helped them achieve personal growth, establish ethical decision-making, and appreciate diverse views.

Former students felt they were encouraged to be lifelong learners.

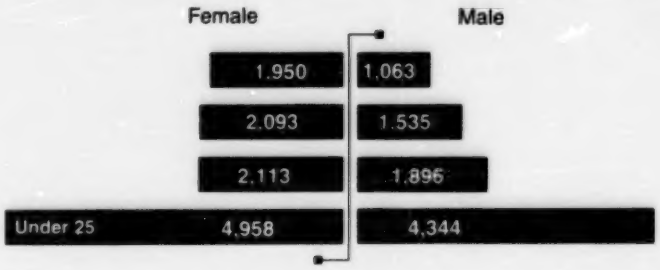
Most students rated their personal development "good" or "very good"



Who are former students?

At the time of the survey, respondents ranged in age from 17 to 80, with a median age of 25. Fifty-five percent of all former students surveyed were female. They outnumbered males in every age group; the difference was most evident in the over-40 age group. There has been virtually no change in the age and gender distribution of respondents for the last five years.

Female students outnumbered males in every age group



Eighty-nine percent of the former students surveyed had completed high school prior to enrolling in their college or institute.

Forty-three percent of respondents had previously studied at the post-secondary level—almost 23 percent had completed a post-secondary credential.

ABOUT THE BC COLLEGE AND INSTITUTE STUDENT OUTCOMES PROJECT

The BC College and Institute Student Outcomes Project is conducted with funding from the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and BC's public colleges and institutes.

The British Columbia Outcomes Working Group (OWG) oversees all aspects of the former student follow-up survey, from data collection through to the reporting of results. The OWG is a long-standing partnership among colleges, university colleges, institutes, and system bodies, such as the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, the Advanced Education Council of BC, and the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer. The partnership is one of shared interests, funding, and expertise.

The survey results are used:

- *By colleges, university colleges, and institutes to evaluate and improve program offerings and services.*
- *By the Ministry to support decision-making and program evaluation.*
- *By students, parents, and the general public to make informed post-secondary education choices.*

MORE INFORMATION

Under the guidance of the Outcomes Working Group, CEISS produces a range of reports based on the results of the Student Outcomes Survey. A series of more detailed reports from the 2000 survey will be released during the spring and summer of 2001.

If you would like more information about Student Outcomes Survey reports, please contact:

The Centre for Education Information
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Victoria, BC V8W 3K4
Tel (250) 413-4400

http://outcomes.ceiss.org/

OWG Outcomes Working Group
British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology
Centre For Education Information